FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

The Women's Daily Irony Supplement

Judy Gruen
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When humorist Judy Gruen's husband presented her with a visit to a spa for her birthday, she realized, "This was the first time I ever had a facial steam treatment other than when I opened the dishwasher in the middle of a load."

That is the kind of witty observation Gruen makes in her newest book, and one that millions of baby boomer parents, especially moms, will certainly identity with. Gruen is the creator and host of the blog *Off My Noodle* in which she riffs on parenthood, friendship, family life, and being a woman in the new millennium. This book is a compilation of nearly sixty of her favorite columns.

A graduate of the University of California-Berkeley and Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, Gruen is the author of two previous books; both humorous looks at timely topics: *Carpool Tunnel Syndrome: Motherhood as Shuttle Diplomacy* and *Till We Eat Again: Confessions of a Diet Dropout*.

She's the mother of four (two teens and two almost-teens) with a solid marriage of nearly twenty years under her belt, so she writes what she knows. After a neighbor sells Gruen on a new skin care system, she notices the name of each anti-aging product begins with the letters "Re," "a prefix that essentially means 'Do over.'"

Her children are older than in her earlier books, and she realizes there's now a wider range of possibilities to embarrass them.

For example, the whole family goes camping and Mom suggests singing around the campfire. Suddenly, it's just Gruen and her husband. "The kids had vanished, but I spied one hiding behind a nearby tree. I had warned him that he would one day regret choosing fire engine red sneakers, but of course he didn't listen," she writes.

There are some laugh-out-loud moments as readers see their own families reflected in ordinary life transitions such as teens learning how to drive. Gruen remarks on the irony that the same kids who “can’t even remember to close a refrigerator door when they leave the kitchen” shoulder the enormous responsibility “of navigating our 3,000 pound minivan down city streets.”

The book is divided into five parts (Part I is “A Woman’s Home is Her Hassle”) with like topics organized together. The articles are usually a couple of pages in length, making for a fairly quick read, a plus for busy boomer moms who will see a bit of themselves in Gruen’s stories and travails.

As Gruen points out, women need to take care of themselves, before they come to a certain point—as she did when her friends called, inviting her to go with them to a club: “Sam’s Club or Wal-Mart?” she inquired.